

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 28

BY SENATORS ADLEY, ALARIO, ALLAIN, AMEDEE, APPEL, BROOME, BROWN, BUFFINGTON, CHABERT, CLAITOR, CORTEZ, CROWE, DONAHUE, DORSEY-COLOMB, ERDEY, GALLOT, GUILLORY, HEITMEIER, JOHNS, KOSTELKA, LAFLEUR, LONG, MARTINY, MILLS, MORRELL, MORRISH, MURRAY, NEVERS, PEACOCK, PERRY, PETERSON, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, TARVER, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, WARD AND WHITE

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of United States Navy Lieutenant Commander Jonas Kelsall in Operation Enduring Freedom.

WHEREAS, Jonas Kelsall was a native of Shreveport, Louisiana, and a graduate of Caddo Magnet High School, where he played soccer with lifelong friend and fellow Navy Seal, Chief Petty Officer Robert J. Reeves; and

WHEREAS, Jonas Kelsall enlisted in the United States Navy after graduation and was successful in his efforts to become a member of the Navy Special Warfare Operations; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Commander Kelsall attended the University of Texas Reserve Officer Training Corps when he completed Basic Underwater Demolition training, and in the process, he met his wife, Victoria; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Commander Kelsall, exhibiting great leadership qualities, rose through the officers' ranks, and would be named the mission leader of a quick reaction force made up of Special Operations personnel sent to Wardak Province in eastern Afghanistan to battle terrorists and insurgents dug into the rugged terrain along the border with Pakistan; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Commander Kelsall was thirty-two years old when he and the twenty-nine other Navy Special Warfare Operatives were given the dangerous, nighttime mission on August 6, 2011, of assisting an Army Ranger unit engaged in a fierce firefight in the Tangi Valley and pinned down by Taliban insurgents; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Commander Kelsall's childhood friend, Chief Petty Officer Robert Reeves, was ironically part of the force lead by Kelsall that relieved the Rangers and pushed back the enemy forces; and

WHEREAS, the CH-47 Chinook helicopter was attempting to take off after Lieutenant Commander Kelsall and his team disengaged the enemy when an insurgent rocket propelled grenade struck the aircraft and brought it down, killing all thirty-eight persons aboard; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Commander Kelsall had deployed to hot spots around the world during his Navy career, always distinguishing himself, his team, the Navy and his country with his brave actions; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Commander Kelsall's awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, two Bronze Star Medals with V Device for valor, Purple Heart, the Joint Service Commendation Medal with V Device, three Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, a Joint Service Achievement Medal, a Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary valor, the Combat Action Ribbon, a Navy Unit Commendation, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, Navy Rifle Marksmanship Medal and Navy Pistol Marksmanship Medal.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend its deepest and most profound condolences to the family of Navy Lieutenant Commander Jonas Kelsall for their immeasurable loss and his brave service and ultimate sacrifice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to his wife, Victoria, and to his parents, John and Terri Kelsall.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE